

HORSE FACTS

and

FANCIES

Fairfax-Blakeborough



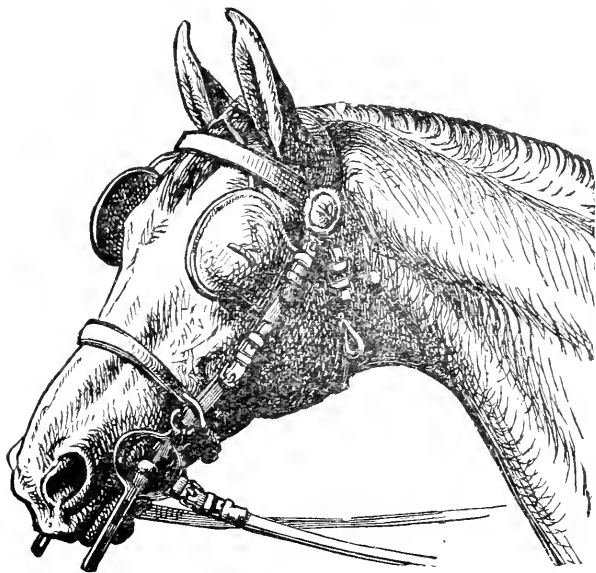
JOHN A. SEEVERNS

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By

J. Fairfax-Blakeborough, M.C.

*(Author of Northern Racing Records, England's Oldest Hunt, Northern Sport and Sportsmen, The Yorkshireman and the Horse, Post and Paddock Pars and Poems, etc., etc.).*



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# *Horse Facts and Fancies.*

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“It ‘ain’t the ‘untin’ ‘urts the ‘orses, it’s the ‘ammer,  
‘ammer, ‘ammer on the ‘ard, ‘igh road.”



“Here’s to MacAdam, the Mac of all Maes,  
Here’s to the road we ne’er tire on ;  
Let me but roll o’er the granite he cracks,  
Ride ye who like it on iron.  
Let the steam pot  
Hiss till it’s hot  
Give me the speed of the Tantivy Trot.”

It was in 1834 Egerton Warburton wrote the foregoing. It is certain he would not raise his glass to the average roads of to-day, which seem to be made exclusively with a view to the convenience of motor traffic. Those who have their finger on the pulse of transport economics are convinced that there will long be a place in the scheme of things for the horse in this connection, apart altogether from hunting and hacking. Even in America, the land of “hustle” and motors, this is felt to be so, as witness the following from one of her poets :

“Though the automobile whizzes over the scene,  
That once was so peaceful and still,  
Leaving dust in its wake and the scent of benzine,  
As it disappears over the hill ;  
Though its zipps and its jolts give alarm to the colts,  
Let us not for one moment forget  
That, in spite of man’s need for excitement and speed,  
There is room for the old horse yet.”

The question as to the greatest age a horse has ever attained has often been discussed, and is one of perennial interest. Possibly "Old Bill," the property of the late Mr. Petrie, of Edinburgh, is entitled to claim the honour of being the Methuselah amongst horses. He lived to be sixty, and was eventually shot, though doing light work to the end. Professor Owen Williams vouched for the accuracy of this horse's great age, his father having attended "Old Bill." A grey polo pony, named "Blue Peter," which went out from England to the Argentine, lived to be forty-seven, and sired seventeen foals the year he died there (1915). He lost all his teeth and was fed on mash. Even these remarkable cases of longevity, however, paled before a Northern instance of a long-lived ass, which fully earned its title of "Old Adam." Dying in 1835, "Old Adam" was the property of Mr. Carr, at Keighley, Yorkshire, and a local newspaper of that day recorded that the donkey "was in Carr's family above eighty years, and was fourteen years old when they bought it. So this venerable specimen of asinine longevity departed this life upwards of ninety-five years of age." I do not stake my immortal soul on the truthfulness of the foregoing claim. I should want to see the birth certificate before I believed. Sir Guy Graham, Bart. (grandson of the great Sir Bellingham, of hunting and racing fame), told me some time ago of a painting at his picturesque Yorkshire seat, Norton Conyers, near Ripon, of another veteran. He says:—

"The picture in question was painted on the wall of the servants' hall here. Unfortunately, two years ago it had to be cut through in order to make a new window, and now all trace of him has gone. The inscription ran: "'Jolly," a coach horse, born 1760, died 1822.' He was a black horse,



hideously ugly, and rather of the Percheron type, with a bit of Dales pony in him."



The most remarkable cases of equine longevity which have come within my own personal ken were those of an old black hunter mare which the Hon. Miss Sidney used to ride to hounds in the merry past with the Cleveland, and a cob, at work in 1924 near Whitby, though over 40. Miss Sidney's mare was pensioned off at Ingleby Manor, and lived to be nearly forty. The famous Touchstone was 31 at the time of his death, as was the great bay Bolton. These veterans, however, pale as mere juveniles before a case reported in the *Gentleman's Magazine* in 1753. In view of the recurring interest in the subject this is quite worth quoting:—

"January.—Died at Snow Hall, near Gainford, a drum horse who was in Gen. Carpenter's regiment at the battle of Sheriff-muir in 1715, being then 7 years old, where he received a bullet in his neck, which was extracted after his death."

This would make the drum horse 45 years old. The working life of horses is probably much shorter in these days, owing to modern road-making methods, which "knocks their legs up." The grassy strips at each side of the main highways which horsemen used to use to save the "'ammer, 'ammer, 'ammer," have now disappeared in most places, and only a veritable sheet of glass—often bevelled at that—is available to those who ride or drive horses. Failing the grass-covered stretches which made for safety and comfort of both horse and rider, there is an alternative which is referred to on the cover of this booklet,

for the benefit of those who combine a love for the horse with the practical application of the slogan, "Safety first."



In an average day's work at slow pace, it is computed a horse lifts his feet 11,000 times and 8,000 times during a hard day's work. The consequent "jarring," especially on hard roads, is thus obvious. Now it is this same "jarring" which shortens the working days of horses and "knocks up" their legs. There is in Norfolk (so Mr. H. C. Callaby tells us) a smithy which has for a sign a well-made hunter's shoe, under which is the following inscription :—

"Gentlemen, as you pass by,  
Upon this shoe pray cast an eye,  
If your horse is shod straighter,  
I'll shoe it wider ;  
I'll ease the horse,  
And I'll ease the rider."

That old farrier was proud of his work, and had he lived in this generation he would doubtless have been amongst the hundreds of smiths who have discovered the value of Gray's Patent Flexible Bridge Pads, which not only "ease the horse and ease the rider" but prevent slipping, avoid accidents, and materially add to the working life of the horse. Farmers of to-day have much greater opportunities than had this old Norfolk worthy of protecting horses and riders, and the calls upon them are much greater in view of the pad or bar which Mr. Gray invented. It gives a real grip on the most glassy road. It is really a kindness to horse-owners who do not yet use this patent to urge its

virtues in the words of *The Field*—a journal with a great reputation and which does not lightly advocate any new invention or idea :

“This pad has never failed to please the many experts who have tested it . . . but we prefer to write from personal knowledge, and we may refer to two experiments within the past fortnight, when we ourselves had the opportunity of observing the pad in use. . . . If we were to write for a week we could not give stronger evidence than this . . . that at the remount depot at Swaythling soldiers hardly dare ride the slippery road into Southampton unless they are protected by the steel and rubber contrivance which Mr. Gray has brought to such a pitch of perfection.”



It is claimed for the Cleveland Bay breed—a fixed type anterior to the thoroughbred—that it has the best feet of any horse in the world, and that because of this its life of utility is longer. Clevelandds have a wonderful amount of bone of great density and quality, and have been used by practically every foreign Government in the world for grading up their own native breeds. At the present time, H.M. The King is the most extensive breeder of this class of horse, for which it is claimed “you cannot put them wrong.” This is tantamount to saying that in all gears—on the road, on the land, for the saddle, slow or fast work, they can do what is asked of them. To-day the Yorkshire farmers work them on the land, the King has them in his State carriage, the Hon. Geo. Savile amongst others, drives them in his coach, whilst that great horseman, Sir Alfred E. Pease, Bart., has ridden them to hounds. Incidentally, at horse shows they’ve won in their own classes, in hunter foal and brood mare classes, and also carried off the prizes for leaping.

Yorkshire, of course, has always held premier place in the counties for horse-breeding, and at one time its reputation was not less for horse-stealing. This gave rise to the old saw, "If you shake a bridle over a Yorkshireman's grave, he'll rise up and steal a horse." Then, too, in *Romany Rye*, we find a Lincolnshire ostler saying to George Borrow: "By no manner of means permit a Yorkshireman to get up into the saddle, for if you do it is 3 to 1 he rides off with your horse; he can't help it; trust a cat amongst cream, but never trust a Yorkshireman on the saddle of a good horse." "The Druid," in "Post and Paddock," remarked: "The blood horse has always been the idol of the Yorkshiremen, who were first to chronicle his deeds; and attendance on his race-course levees 's an honest and broad-bottomed custom which they will never resign." Then, Black, in the *History of the Turf*, tells us: "In Yorkshire it is reasonably believed there has always been some kind of horse-racing from the very earliest moment at which there were two horses and two Yorkshiremen in the county of Ridings." Surtees, who created dear vulgar old Jorrocks, also agrees, and says: "Now it is well known that a Yorkshireman is nothing without his horse, and if he does know anything better than racing it is hunting."



"No sport was ever worth a rap  
For a rational man to play,  
Into which no danger or mishap  
Can possibly find its way."

So said poor Lindsay Gordon. Of course, there's a great deal of truth in it. Half the fun of fox-hunting and steeple-

chasing consists of overcoming obstacles, the spirit of competition, and the exciting element of danger. These, together with the essential and concomitant good fellowship extended by congenial companions constitute the very heart of both forms of sport. I've had my share of falls at both games, but like most other folk who ride, I don't appreciate the present-day necessity of carrying a spare neck and leg in my pocket when riding to and from hounds. Only the other day in the Middleton country, someone remarked that riding across the stiffest country is child's play in this evil generation compared with safely negotiating some roads. Well! the genius of man has stepped in to provide a means of safety against existing conditions, and those who value whole limbs and horses with unmarked knees are protecting themselves against the changes and chances of the roads with something more than an "accident policy." A famous transport firm found they could not carry on unless they "did something" to enable their horses to travel, and their veterinary surgeon, who tried the Gray Horseshoe Pads on shunters as well as heavy horses, writes: "Pads are used front and behind, and act very satisfactorily, especially in damp weather when wood paving and granite setts are in a greasy condition." This is one of hundreds of letters of a similar nature received by the Gray Horseshoe Pad Co., Ltd., Birmingham, from veterinary surgeons, hunting men, farriers, and others concerned with horses, which I have read.



Speaking of "a time coming when one must do something" reminds me of my days in the Service when a dashing XVth Hussar tore past me sawing and jaggging his horse in the mouth. I yelled at him to come back, and eventually he did so, and I laid into him with my tongue.

He waited till I had finished and then said very respectfully, "Well, sir, there comes a time when one has got to do something and the 'orse was a-running away with me." Of course, there *does* come a time under such circumstances when one *has* to "do something," though my own experience is that if a horse means to go, you might as well pull at his tail as at his mouth. Apropos of this, I remember Mr. W. Leng, who has exported so many hundred blood 'uns and is now training at Middleham, standing with me at the rails of the parade-ground at a race-meeting and remarking, "God sends the horses and the devil sends the lads to look after them and the roads for them to travel on." This remark was occasioned by several of the lads "jagging" their horses in the mouth continually as they went round. I know of few forms of refined cruelty which make the blood of a horseman boil so much as to see a rider or driver jag-jagging his horse in the mouth. The unfortunate milk-float cobs must positively hate those who are placed in charge of them because of this systematic cruelty. If only the police or N.S.P.C.A. would bring a case or two before the court in each district, they would be conferring a real kindness on the equine species. I was always taught to treat the reins as though they were two bits of silk which would snap if one snatched at them or held on by 'em. One fears that a great many lads in racing stables learn to ride by holding on to the reins. Anyhow, horses found useless for racing usually have to be re-mouthed before they are any use as hunters or hacks, and even then they frequently pull like the very deuce. "Hands" may be, and probably *are*, a God-given gift, but the elementary principles of horsemanship can at any rate be taught to beginners. I always think it is a very sound plan to make cavalry recruits drop their reins when they are receiving their first lesson in jumping. It not only makes them independent

and trust to knee and thigh grip and balance, but it also saves the snatching at the horses' mouths, which makes some horses really afraid to jump when they've "had some." Do you know the lines about "the perfect hand"? There's a wealth of sound wisdom in them:—

"A horseman's gift—the perfect hand,  
And graceful seat of confidence,  
The head to reckon and command  
When danger stills the coward's sense.  
"The nerve unshaken by mischance,  
The cure unlessened by success,  
And modest bearing to enhance  
The natural charms of manliness."



Of course, "The nerve unshaken by mischance" is a beautiful theory propounded in pre-wire, pre-glass-surfaced roads. The bravest horseman "wot ever was foaled" (as Jorrocks would put it) finds he *has* nerves when he meets either of these later-day man-traps. A great horseman and acknowledged first-rate authority on hunters, like hundreds of others, has found it wise to throw away no chances in these times, and has his horses shod with the pads referred to on the cover of this booklet. He says that he has "found them in every way efficient." Coming from a sportsman of such wide and various experience, this is indeed valuable and convincing testimony.



They had curious "cures" for horses in the old days, and were as keen on bleeding them as they were on "letting

blood" in human beings. St. Stephen's Day was a recognised "blood-letting" time. For absolute ignorance and superstitious folly, however, I think the early manner of treating worms in horses wins hands down. During the latter part of the War when I was in charge of about eight hundred horses I used to starve worm cases for a day and then give them a dose of linseed oil. I found this was about as useful as anything to rid them of these internal parasites which were making them look like screws. After seeing a number of dead horses opened, and noting that their stomachs were lined with scores of detestable "hangers-on," it used to make me really unhappy to think any of my horses were harbouring such undesirable company.

In addition to the larvæ which fasten themselves to the wall of the stomachs of horses, and often cause such emaciation by sapping the vitality of animals so affected, the maggot of the warble fly is also called "bot" in the Northern counties. The latter plays havoc with hides by puncturing them when ready to issue and further develop before propagating its species. In "The Gentleman's Jockey and Approved Farrier" (1704) we have a quaint cure for the stomach bot, as follows :—

"A most excellent receipt for botts, or any worm ; which is not easy and most certain without sickness. Take the soft downy hairs which grow in the ears of an horse and which you can clip away when you poll him, and the little short tuft which grows on the top of his forehead underneath his foretop ; and a pretty quantity of them. Mix them well with a pottle of sweet oats, and so



give them to the horse to eat. There is nothing which will kill worms more assuredly."

Markham's "Masterpiece" (1668) has much to say on the various species of worms found internally in horses, and gives divers cures, including "the warm guts of hens thrust down the affected animal's throat for three mornings running," and (one of several alternatives) "hens' dung mixed with stale ale." De Grey, who wrote his "Compleat Horseman and Expert Ferrier" a year or two later, and closely followed Markham, agrees that bots and other worms "ingender in the body by means of evil, raw and flegmatique meats which have turned to bad digestion." He also gives the curious cure:—

"Take the guts of a well-grown chicken (all but the gizzard) and rowle it up warm in the powder of brimstone and bay-salt, and put it down his throat, and trot him up and down half-an-hour."

One feels grateful to-day for the College of Veterinary Surgeons, much though some of the faculty are abused.

John Lawrence, one of the earliest "vet. writers," was inclined (as was his wont) to be rather pompous without being very illuminating, on this subject. He wrote in his "Sporting Dictionary" (1803): "The mode by which they are conveyed to the body (or how they are engendered there, may possibly long continue a matter of conjecture or ambiguity." He speaks with sarcasm of the ignorance of early

writers, and of one following the erroneous theories of the other.



Speaking of old foolish customs reminds me of one, hoary with age, which was pleasant and harmless. There is an unwritten law in connection with the first shoeing of a young horse known as "wetting its head." Recently, a youthful owner, not familiar with local usages and lore, was about to lead a first-time shod hunter out of the forge when the smith said, in a tone of voice eloquent of surprise and reproof: "Nay, however, you can't take it home till we've wet its head." "Wet its head!" reiterated the owner of the horse, "what do you mean?" Then the smith explained:

"No one ever fetches a young hoss here to be shod for the first time withoot stannin' treat at the 'public,' an' wettin' its head. I've been here for over forty years, an' I never knew of but one case of an owner of a hoss which had shoes put on the first time that didn't stand treat, and it was the same in my father's day. The man who didn't have his horse's head wet lost it (that is, it died) in a few weeks."

So, after this explanation, the smith, his apprentice, and the veterans who daily haunt the smithy, adjourned "over the way" to observe the customary "head-wetting." Apparently the landlord expected them, for he greeted the party (which I had been urged to join) with: "Now, then, you'll be wettin' the young hoss's head, I lay (guess). Has he stood middlin' quiet?" "Like a Christian!—no bother i' no way," replied the knight of the leather apron. Some of the greybeards added their testimony as to the docility

of the newly-shod, and whilst glasses of ale and "drops o' gin" were being brought in, instances of other horses which kicked the shop down, were recalled. Then, when the glasses were all in front of the "head-wetters," the smith rose—as the main actor in the operation which had just been completed and the presiding genius of the aftermath—and made a little set speech, probably the replica of many others delivered on similar occasions :

"Well! here's wishing good luck to the colt, hopin' it'll never be owther sick or sorry, an' that it'll do well for you while you have it, an' leave a nice profit when you sell it."

To this toast we all raised our glasses. The owner's "very good health an' prosperity" was then drunk, and the ceremony of "wetting the colt's head" was at an end. I believe at one time there was some ritual at the forge. A gallon or so of beer was carried thither from the inn, and passed three times over the forge. A pint or so of the liquor added to half a bucket of warm water was then offered to the horse. That part of the custom seems, however, to have become obsolete. It is quite a regular occurrence in the Northern counties for a farmer or dealer who has sold a horse to take the buyer to the nearest inn "to wet its head for luck," though the obligation does not seem so binding as upon the owner (or his representative) to stand treat when a horse makes its first appearance at the forge.



One could fill a book with old farriers' customs. Another was "bishopsing" horses. Generally this meant "a fake" upon horses' teeth to conceal their real age, though an old smith tells me that when shoes which had been worn were used again on other horses and the full price was charged as for new shoes, such horses were said to be "bishopsed."

Of course, smiths are much too honest in these days to be guilty of such conduct or of visiting the local "knacker's" yard to buy up the heaps of old shoes removed from the feet of slaughtered horses.

Bailey, in his *English Dictionary* of 1728, gives "bishoping" as meaning: "Amongst horse-coursers"; "Those sophistications they use to make an old horse appear young, a bad one good, etc." Taplin, who published his *Sporting Dictionary* in 1803, is a little more specific and describes "bishoping" as

"An operation performed upon the teeth of a horse, and supposed to have derived its modern appellation from an eminent and distinguished dealer of the name of Bishop; whether from any peculiar neatness in, or reputed celebrity for, a personal performance of the deception, it is most probably not possible (or necessary) to ascertain. The purport of the operation is to furnish horses of ten or twelve years old with a regeneration of teeth, bearing the appearance of five or six, and is thus performed. The horse being powerfully twitched by both the nose and the ears, a cushioned roller (large enough to keep the jaws extended) is then placed in the mouth; which done, the teeth of the under-jaw are somewhat reduced in their length (according to their growth) by the friction of a whitemith's cutting file: an engraver's tool is then employed in taking away as much from the centre of the surface of each tooth as will leave a conspicuous cavity in the middle; this cavity (or rather every individual cavity) is then burned black with an iron instrument red-hot, and adapted to the purpose; a composition of cement is then insinuated, so well prepared in both colour and consistence, that it is frequently not discoverable (at least to slight observers) for many months after its introduction."



It is interesting to note in connection with the burning operation that so early as 1535 Tyndale, in *Obedience of a Christian Man*, uses the term in a similar sense, probably long before the operation known as "bishoping" was practised by "faking" horse-copers. Tyndale says:—

"When a thinge speadeth not well, we borowe a speach and saye, 'The bysshope hath blessed it, because that nothingspeadeth well that they medyll withall. Yf the podelche be burned to, or the meat over roasted, we saye, 'The bysshope hath put his fete in the pottle, or The bysshope played the coke, because the bysshopes burn who their lust and whosoever displeaseth them.'"

Thus, in Tusser's *Husbandry*, we find:—

"Blesse Cisley, good mistress, that bushop doth ban,  
For burning the milk of her cheese to the pan."



The older one grows and the more convinced one becomes that of all pleasures in life the greatest, most lasting and happiest we can look back upon are those which have come to us through horse and hound. Whyte Melville, you remember, told us he had "played the game all round," and that "the best of his fun he owed it to horse and hound." It is passing strange then that there should through all time have been so much trickery, villainy and roguery associated with man's best pal. Yet it is so.



At one time—not so long ago that many of us cannot remember it—every market town had its mews, or quarter in which lived a colony of horse and cattle dealers or jobbers (particularly the former), who were known as "The Forty Thieves." Wherever there was a horse or cattle sale in Yorkshire, they were found congregated, and they drove long distances on their flat carts to attend farm sales, prepared to buy any old harness, worn-out horses, or those which had a local "reputation" and therefore had no bidders amongst the farmers or better-class dealers in attendance. This band of "Forty Thieves" was also ready to buy stock which for some reason or other was going at a very low

figure, and any odds and ends which no one else would cart away. Their type is not quite extinct, though not nearly so numerous as it was twenty years ago. One always knew the tribe by their silver rings, their red scarves, the cut of their coats (with big "poacher" pockets), their glaring bandana handkerchieves, and the long whips which they invariably carried. To a great extent they lived by their wits, and were so quickened therein that they invariably came off best in a bargain. Though essentially nomads, who toured the round of the fairs and often slept under the hoods of their flat carts, and though it was more than suspected that their horses and other stock were turned into farmers' pastures to graze at night, they never seemed short of money and produced a pretty hefty bundle of notes or bag of good red gold when they were called upon to pay. Either rightly or wrongly, however, they were not trusted, and earned for themselves as a class the title of "The Forty Thieves." Many of them were the first cousins of the gipsies, and were at one time credited with stealing horses, selling them, then stealing them back and so altering their appearance that neither the person from whom they had stolen them nor he who had bought them could recognise their animals. They were supposed, too, to be past masters in all the horse "fakes" and "doctoring" which brought out an unsound animal temporarily sound, and all the "gingerings," "figgings," and so forth, which were at one time a part and parcel of horse sales in the days of the fairs. They were also credited with possessing a stock of farrier lore which enabled them to soon bring an ill-thriven, "poor" (i.e., emaciated) cow or bullock into the market fat, or apparently so. Sometimes the butcher who had dealings with them discovered that the seemingly fat animal was quite the contrary when killed. There are endless stories told of the wiles, deceits, tricks, roguery and jockeyings of

these Yorkshire "Forty Thieves" gangs, who seem to have handed on their secrets and mantle from one generation to another. Possibly tradition is exaggerated, but I distinctly remember when a boy setting out to a fair with a couple of horses to sell, and being cautioned to have no sort of truck with the "Forty Thieves"—not even to give them a "show" or allow them to throw a leg over either of the animals, or I might never see them again. On the very opening page of his *Equestrian Monitor* (published in 1796), quaint old Taplin advises "care and circumspection" in horse-dealing, and then goes on to speak of the "Forty Thieves," thus :—

"It is the want of this qualification (care, etc.), that renders so many equestrian adventurers (particularly juvenile gentlemen of fortune) the dupes of those designing sharks, whose spacious attractions are so forcibly displayed in almost every street of a fair. To guard against the numerous and incredible deceptions in the art of horse-dealing is a task very far beyond the power of moderate ability."

He continues that the knowledge of the reputation they have gained made them "exulting and pique themselves on their pre-eminence in deception, and acknowledge they would rather prey upon each other than not continue in perpetual practice." There is some reference in York's Quarter Sessions records to "horse-stealing" by the "Forty Thieves" but I cannot turn it up at the moment. The term, of course, is taken from "Ali Baba."



In these days of York to London rides and equine endurance tests, the following letter from Captain W. J. Cooper, R.H.A., addressed to The Gray Horseshoe Pad Co., Ltd., Birmingham, is of considerable interest, and may provide a helpful "tip" to horsemen :—

"I would like to state how beneficial I found the use of your pads on my mare Daisy in the recent Military Trials, International Horse Show. I consider them invaluable for any horse that has a fair share of road work to do, from a safe as well as a humane point of view. Besides allowing a horse to stand in safety on slippery roads, they lessen and ease that concussion and that leg weariness hard going produces. They must be most useful for hunters."

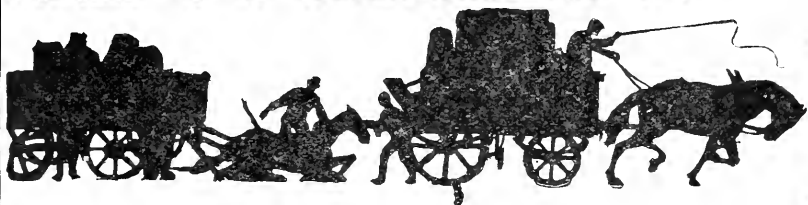


Captain Cooper on "Daisy," shod all round with Gray's Pads, was first to arrive at Olympia in the Military Ride from Aldershot, June, 1920 (39 miles by road), all competitors previously having to gallop and jump between 2 and 3 miles over the Regulation Steeplechase Course, Aldershot.



Possibly in these days of increasing motor traffic, there is some case against the horse in London thoroughfares. Traffic is often held up owing to horses slipping and being unable to start; indeed, so frequent has this become that there is a movement on foot to prohibit horse traffic in the Metropolis within the next six years. The existing difficulties and the annoyance caused by delays would be (and in many cases *are*) removed by horses being shod so that they may be pulled up, started, and able to travel in the direction desired without having to be drawn across other traffic. All those who have adopted Gray's Patent Flexible Bridge Pads (and these include Railway Companies, Corporations, and Transport Contractors amongst others throughout the country) have positively proved them (from a commercial standpoint) *sound economy* inasmuch as they decrease the wear and tear on horseflesh and cut out entirely costly delays, accidents, much lameness and dangers incidental to modern traffic.





*Horses  
won't Slip*

ON  
MOTOR ROADS  
SHOD  
WITH

**GRAY'S  
PATENT** →

GIVE A POSITIVE GRIP during  
FULL LIFE OF SHOES.



**HORSE OWNERS**

STUDYING ECONOMY CANNOT AFFORD  
TO IGNORE ACTUAL FACTS.

**SLIPPING  
HORSES**

IMPEDE ALL TRAFFIC,  
ENDANGER HORSE PROHIBITION,  
WASTE TIME, MONEY, ENERGY - FREQUENTLY  
LAME THEMSELVES - RAPIDLY DEPRECIATE -  
ARE A DANGER TO THEMSELVES, AND THOSE  
USING THEM.

**GRAY'S (Patent) FLEXIBLE BRIDGE PADS**

are the Proved, Guaranteed, Money-saving Device which overcomes all  
these difficulties with Horses on Slippery Roads.

**GRAY'S PADS** are entirely different in construction and effect to any other  
device on the market. The steel plates holding RUBBER  
are made to break across centre - AFFORDING A FROG-EXPANDING, FLEXIBLE, RE-  
SILIENT BRIDGE which the natural frog operates - greatly to its benefit - conjointly with  
the whole foot - frogs are undeniably strengthened and developed - contracted heels rapidly  
expanded by this AID-TO-NATURE DEVICE.

THE EFFICIENCY OF GRAY'S PADS FULLY ENDORSED BY GOVERNMENT (Ministry  
of Transport) after 12 Months' Exhaustive Tests in 22 Different Counties. (See Government  
White Paper, dated December, 1921).

THE ROAD TRANSPORT AND GENERAL INSURANCE CO., LTD., OFFER A 10 %  
REDUCTION IN PREMIUMS ON ALL HORSES FULLY SHOD WITH GRAY'S PADS.

.. ORDER THROUGH YOUR FARRIER. ..

SOLE MANUFACTURERS

**The GRAY HORSESHOE PAD CO., LTD.,**  
Suffolk Street :: BIRMINGHAM.

# Reprint from "The Field." July 24th, 1920.

Best ————  
—First, Mr W. Bai ———— Du ———— wave and  
Parnasi); second, Lieut.-Colonel G. Philipp's groom, A. Platt.

## GRAY'S PATENT FLEXIBLE BRIDGE BAR PADS.

FOR SOME YEARS all owners of horses have been confronted with the problem of slippery roads, caused by the fact that practically all highways and streets, and very many country roads, are treated with preparations of tar, which cause horses to slip about even when travelling at a slow pace, because there is nothing to hold on by. The *Field* has always been looking for a solution of the problem, and is in a position to state that the trouble almost disappears when horses are shod with the flexible bridge bar, which was patented some two or three years ago by Mr Gray. This pad or bar gives a real grip, and this has been proved in scores of trials, and has never failed to please the many experts who have tested it. Many testimonials to this effect are in the possession of the patentee, and these all speak of its value in the strongest terms; but we prefer to write from personal knowledge, and we may refer to two experiences within the past fortnight, when we ourselves had the opportunity of observing the pad in use. The first of these experiences was on Mr Perkins's Nimrod coach between London and Brighton. In the entire length of this journey of some sixty miles there is only one stretch of road—between Pyecombe and Hensfield—which has a gravel surface, and this only extends for about three miles. All the odd fifty-seven miles are tarred, and on the day we did the journey six of the seven teams we used were shod with Gray's pads, and we never saw a horse slip or in any way lose his foothold throughout the journey. The odd team, which had no pads—simply because none were available at the moment—had to be very carefully driven, and Mr Perkins, his stud groom, and his guard all speak in the highest terms of the value of the pads, and would hardly have undertaken the Brighton road without them. The second occasion was the military ride from Aldershot, of which an account by an onlooker is given in the *Field* of June 26. In this ride Capt. Cooper's Daisy, who led all the way, coming in well ahead of her rivals, wore Gray's pads, and in her owner's words after the competition, he found them "worth their weight in gold." If we were to write for a week we could not give stronger evidence than this; but we may add that hunting people are actually adopting the pad, and that at the remount depot at Swaythling soldiers hardly dare ride the slippery road into Southampton unless they are protected by the steel and rubber contrivance which Mr Gray has brought to such a pitch of perfection.

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The Field

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